DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 394 143 CS 215 247

AUTHOR Maginnis, Mary
TITLE Methods of Teaching Creative Writing in High School: A Review of Recent Literature.
PUB DATE [96]
NOTE 18p.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120) -- Information Analyses (070) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Cooperative Learning; *Creative Writing; Definitions; High Schools; Journal Writing; *Poetry; Secondary School Curriculum; *Teaching Methods; Theory Practice Relationship; *Writing Instruction
IDENTIFIERS ERIC; Visiting Authors; Writing about Literature

ABSTRACT

This survey of literature discusses the content and research methodology of 25 articles on creative writing written since 1988. It is divided into sections covering articles discussing (1) definitions of creativity; (2) theoretical aspects of teaching creative writing; (3) specific teaching methods; (4) journal writing to discuss literature; and (5) how to plan a visiting author's program. The review, containing articles from journals and from ERIC, is weighted more heavily towards the areas of theory and poetry because more literature was available in those areas. Section 1 reviews articles by Gary Davis ("Portrait of the Creative Person) and Ron McFarlane ("An Apologia for Creative Writing"). Section 2 reviews articles by Nancy L. Reichart ("Defining and Refining Boundaries of the Creative Writing Workshop"), Lynn Domina ("The Radar O'Reiley School of Creative Writing"), Gayle Elliot ("The Angel in the Academy: The Creative Writer as Helpmeet on the Distaff Side of English Studies"), and Cecil Morris and Dana Haight ("A Funny Thing Happened When We Began to Write"). Section 3 reviews articles by Michael Bugeja ("Why We Stop Reading Poetry"), Diane Lockwood ("Poets on Teaching Poetry"), and Lynn McGee ("Finding the Poet in New Writers") Section 4 reviews articles by Nancy Hudson ("The Violence of Their Lives: The Journal Writing of Two High School Freshmen") and R. W. Burniske ("Creating Dialogue: Teacher Response to Journal Writing"); Section 5 reviews an article by Joseph Sanacore ("Supporting a Visiting Author's Program"). (Contains 25 references.) (TB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

CS

ED 394 143

METHODS OF TEACHING CREATIVE WRITING IN HIGH SCHOOL:

A Review of Recent Literature

Mary Maginnis

Loyola College

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL
HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
M. Maginnis

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

CS215247

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Abstract

This survey of literature on creative writing covers twenty-five articles written since 1988. Content and research methodology are addressed as subject matter. The critiques are organized into sections covering articles on creativity, theoretical aspects of teaching creative writing, approaches to teaching poetry, journal writing, scriptwriting and planning a visiting author's program. Eighteen of the articles were found in journals and seven articles were found in ERIC Document Reproduction Service. The survey examines current qualitative research on influences of preconceptions which an individual brings to creative writing as an author or as an audience, dichotomy between objectivity and subjectivity, methods of tempering the barometer of judgement to influence creative writing in positive ways, and some practical approaches to teaching creative writing in the classroom.

Methods of Teaching Creative Writing in High School:
A Review of Recent Literature

This survey of literature discusses content and research methodology of twenty-five research articles written in the last seven years. The subject matter of the articles includes 1) definitions of creativity, 2) theoretical aspects of teaching creative writing and 3) specific teaching methods. This review is weighted more heavily towards areas of theory and poetry because more literature was available in these areas . The paper is organized by sub-headings of theoretical approaches and various methods defined by their content area.

On Creativity

Gary Davis (1995) introduces his article "Portrait of the Creative Person " by defining a creative person. He presents research from Rogers and Cox on complexities affecting creative development and cites information on the nature of creativity. The article does not address a particular problem, but studies influences, complexities and complications of creative development as well as common affective characteristics. In establishing a theoretical rationale, Davis refers to Maslow's differentiation between types of creativity. This article includes research on complexities affecting creative development and forms a foundation for this survey by relating information on similarities in the conditions of emergence in creative thinking and innovation. In conclusion, Davis notes that creative traits evolve from the combination of a supportive home and school environment . Although lacking a problem, hypothesis or methodology, Davis establishes such a strong theoretical rationale and reference base that inclusion of the article in the survey is justified .

Ron McFarlane (1993) discusses the declining number of accomplished poets and authors, and lack of quality of poetry in his article, "An Apologia for Creative Writing". He submits a historical referenced review of this process. Citing theories of poets, Delmore Schwartz and Joseph Epstein on the downward slide of poetry, he establishes his theoretical rationale. At times, McFarlane's methodology exemplifies the scrutinizing criticism which is deplored by many writing teachers. Its effects on students are discussed in this survey. His article was well-referenced and he has an intriguing prose style.

Theoretical Aspects of Teaching Creative Writing

The problem of defining and structuring creative writing curriculum is addressed in "Defining and Redefining Boundaries in a Creative Writing Workshop" by Nancy L. Reichart (1994). The author's Research Methods class at Florida State University studied a "Writing from Life" class, designed to help students write autobiography, fiction and poetry. The methodology consisted of being participant observers in the classroom and interviewing administrators, teachers and students about the approaches employed in the two classes. Some of the conclusions of the study were that the teachers tended to have preconceived notions that students who signed up for the imaginative writing class were more serious about writing than the students enrolled in the writing on literature class. The study used participants as primary sources and the findings of the study raised questions for administrators at FSU which are posed at the conclusion of the study and are to be further addressed. The study was flawed in that no conclusions were expanded to a larger sector, but remained only within the sphere of that particular school's applications.

The implications of the problems of teachers and students coming from different cultural backgrounds is approached in "The Radar O'Reiley School of Creative Writing" by Lynn Domina (1994). Students may be encouraged to write what they know and then turn in work which is deemed of poor quality by someone who has no idea what cultural elements have combined to produce this work. Domina takes her unusual title from an episode of the television show, "MASH" in which Radar O'Reiley takes a correspondence course and is later advised by Colonel Potter that the first rule of being a writer is to be yourself. A dichotomy arises when a student is urged to write from life experience which may or may not conform to their peers and instructors. Domina develops a theoretical rationale, relating an anecdotal incident with a colleague, drawing conclusions from the movie, "Philadelphia" and citing formal references within the text. Domina studies the issue of persons of alternative lifestyles who know a different reality and may produce creative writing to which heterosexuals have difficulty relating. Their writing is not less valid than a book like Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain. Domina did not include a hypothesis, but included all other formal features of a research study. She did not find any solution to the problem and in conclusion, noted that the only solution lies in the audience acknowledging that a problem exists.

In "The Angel in the Academy: The Creative Writer as Helpmeet on the Distaff Side of English Studies", Gayle Elliot (1994) analyzes the difficult path of female creative writers . She suggests the creative aspect of writing (based on intuition, emotion and self expression) parallels the feminine qualities of women and is thereby stigmatized. Often relegated to a loose foothold in the academic curriculum, creative writing doesn't share the same limelight as research-based scholarly academic study (theory and empirical research). Elliott's research methodology embraces authors such as Joyce Carol Oates, Susan Miller and Virginia Woolf. Woolf is the source of the unusual title of the article in her observation in A Room of One's Own that "the angel in the house " was a metaphor for the Victorian concept of women as the moral center of the household and Victorian society. Woolf felt that before a woman could be free to write, the angel had to be exorcised from the house. Thus, Elliot presents a strong theoretical rationale and establishes a conclusion supported by previously presented material. Elliott's article was one of the more interesting in the survey with a well-documented feminist slant. It would be illuminating to present this theory to a high school class and analyze reactions.

Teacher's attitudes towards student fiction and the issue of creative freedom are addressed in "On the Nature of Fiction Writing" by Don Zancanella (1988). He observes that a teacher's concept of fiction writing is often narrow, concentrating on adults who view student writing with preconceived notions of what it should encompass. This idea compares similarly to Domina's (1994) theories. Zancanella compares fiction writing to play-centered activity, acted out in the theater of the mind. In a direct classroom environment, such fantasy-based writing can be misunderstood. Zancanella's methodology employs examples of his student's writing. He expands on the concept of "Write what you know", previously addressed by Domina. This article was well-organized, had a complete theoretical rationale and all terms were defined. He explains that teachers can enable students to advance beyond the sensational and bizarre media influences to produce fiction of high quality by exposing students to good literature and the work of their peer group. Zancanella suggests teachers broaden their own understanding of fiction by writing it themselves.

Teachers Cecil Morris and Dana Haight (1993) describe their experiences of writing creatively in "A Funny Thing Happened When We Began To Write" . They describe devising a method of exchanging writing in response to the dullness of staff

development and in-service training. Their project evolved into a writing group within their high school which was teacher- centered and driven. Originally their methodology was limited to each other; later it was opened up to English Department faculty and other departments within their school. Morris and Haight exchanged a pair of poems with a cover sheet on Fridays and returned it on the following Monday with a lengthy comment. Poems and responses were included within the article. Poems were gathered into a small anthology and distributed to the school. Morris and Haight were able to devise an exercise springing from their enrichment. Students were asked to write a poem which was then randomly distributed ; classmates were asked to write a lengthy critique. Morris and Haight were able to use their own personal methodology to inspire in-class activity. Although this study did not include a theoretical rationale and was written as a personal narrative, it was well done. The methodology was carefully explained and researched, and it made a worthy inclusion in the survey of literature.

The creative demands which society places on individuals is contrasted with conformist learning approaches in "Creative Writing in the Language Arts" by Marlow Ediger (1994). He suggests that schools explore creative learning experiences which prepare students to face the future. He notes that conformity to standards is required, particularly in the area of grammar. He gives examples of learning experiences which are designed with a creative treatment in mind. Ediger also includes lesson plans to reveal a student's knowledge of a reading assignment. This article was informative and presented useful but not innovative approaches to fostering creativity in the classroom. No theoretical rationale was established and Ediger did not explain if his methods had been tried with any success in the classroom. The methodology in this article was below average.

Catherine Hammond (1994) metaphorically compares writing to loading a computer program in "A User's Guide to the Internal Screen". By grasping or accessing an idea, the user or individual unlocks an internal screen or the brain. Hammond discusses the problem of students who do not have a complete "user's guide" which causes them to hit "the writing wall" which she defines as a blockade which won't allow them to go to the next level. Hammond offers various solutions for this problem. Creative writing efforts are analyzed in the article and common problems are discussed. Written in the style of a personal narrative, this article does not rely on

references or attempt to build a theoretical rationale. No systematic methodology is established. The author simply relates her views on certain aspects of teaching writing. Hammond has a unique theory, but fails to present any type of research base or conclusion. The article communicates the climate of the classroom in a hands-on instructive way. The author employs a crisp authoritative voice, quite different in tone from other research in the survey.

In "Context for Creativity: Listening to Voices, Allowing A Pause", Fern Tavalin (1995) explains her awareness of the voicelessness of certain literature. The author was inspired by Reason and Hawkins (1990) and their research on storytelling. The methodology consists of undertaking a study utilizing four female writers as participants to exchange stories about their personal voice to define and explore storytelling. Using a formal descriptive process set forth by Casini (1975), five rules for description are employed. A transcript of one of the stories, as well as the group reaction is included in the article. Tavalin probes the social nature of personal voice , its relationship to gesture, selflessness in women, and the entanglement of inner and outer voices. Lack of expectation freed the participants to establish their own safety net. Tavalin notes that creative expression can be stifled or be made to flourish depending on the surrounding environment. Tavalin's article followed a formal research methodology and was one of the best articles encountered in the survey. Davis (1995) describes a similar process in his article on creative qualities. Storytelling could easily be adapted into the classroom using some of Tavalin's suggestions to encourage the development of an inner voice and to help overcome self-consciousness.

Approaches to Teaching Poetry

Michael Bugeja (1992) addresses Northrop Frye's contention that in fourth grade, most children are enthusiastic about poetry, but by adulthood, no one bothers to read it. His article, "Why We Stop Reading Poetry", adopts this notion as a research problem, limiting his study to eighty freshmen and sophomore journalism students. He states a null hypothesis and administers a written survey utilizing a systematic approach. Bugeja correlated his responses into a table, presented in the text. In response to the question of why they stopped reading poetry, 34% of the students responded it was because their teacher criticized their interpretation. Only 14% overcame such criticism and were able to rekindle their affection for poetry. From his

research, Bugeja concludes that students who are told they do not understand poetry because they cannot explicate it, soon stop reading poetry. The author details personal experiences of several of his students, showing how teachers eradicated their love of poetry. Literary interpretation is historically analyzed, blaming overzealous explication of poetry and fiction on John Crowe Ranson's theory of "New Criticism", which discouraged feeling and personal experiences from literary interpretation. In conclusion, Bugeja notes that the study of creative writing can be reaffirming and has a place in today's impersonal world. He notes that teachers should share poetry with students, rather than insist on explicating it. His theory contrasts with McFarlane's (1993), earlier discussed in the survey. Bugeja's article was well-supported in research and represents one of the more precise examples of a research study included in the survey. His input is an interesting addition to concepts introduced by Zancanella (1988).

Dianne Lockwood (1994) explored attitudes of poets and their ideas about poetry as a school subject in "Poets on Teaching Poetry". The author contacted the Dodge Foundation which sponsored a conference she had attended (where she had networked with guest poets in formulating her problem). She arranged for seven poets to participate in a study she formulated. The systematic approach consisted of a written survey detailing their methodology on teaching poetry and their curriculum recommendations. Lockwood details their individual replies, involving personal narrative on how they came to be poets. Problems with the article consisted of a lack of organization and the data not being grouped in a consistent way. Lockwood does establish a theoretical rationale, and recommends references on poets and teaching approaches. In conclusion, Lockwood chooses to use the poets comments rather than paraphrase or write a conclusion herself. This seemed inadequate and could be interpreted as a shirking of the ownership of the article, not taking final responsibility . Although the study was useful in the variety of data collected from the poets, it was difficult to understand due to the lack of consistency in her approach.

Marlow Ediger (1992) contends in "The Pupil and Poetry" that students are able to improve their vocabulary development by developing an appreciation for poetry. He notes that an understanding of poetry develops in pace with progress in other school subjects. He provides an in-depth perspective of the relationship between creative writing and creative thinking. Similar to Bugeja (1992), Zancanella (1988) , Domina

(1994), he suggests focusing on ideas rather than the mechanics of writing and notes that careful consideration should be given to praising student's work. Ediger identifies factors which inhibit creative expression. Terms such as limerick, onomatopoeia and haiku are defined with examples. Ediger presents a referenced and footnoted article which includes primary and secondary sources. Although the article lacks a specific methodology, it presents useful points on teaching creative writing and includes a research base.

Lynn McGee (1995) reports on her experiences as leader of a creative writing workshop for literary students at five branch sites for the Brooklyn Public Library Adult Literacy Program. In her article, "Finding the Poet in New Writers", her methodology involved workshops of two to ten people where she employed using a poem written by one group as the text for another group. She developed a set format: 1) reading aloud from a sample text, 2) jotting down thoughts related to the topic, 3) sharing that writing , and 4) extracting lines for a new poem from it. During the process, she recorded ideas and the evolving poem on a large newsprint sheet of paper, the group decided how to divide lines, and they brainstormed for a title. McGee gives examples of poems the classes wrote and discusses their weaknesses and merits. She defined terms used in the article. Some of the students she worked with continued to write poems on their own. McGee's article lacked a problem or hypothesis, but delivered a definite methodology and a systematic analysis of group output. Her orderly method of conducting workshops and using poems of peer groups made the article a positive contribution to the survey.

Julie Landsman (1993) discusses methods of relaxing students about their writing in "Loosening Up the Up-Tight Writing Student". She describes some students as hypersensitized about grammar, spelling, and vocabulary, creatively blocked by self-censorship. In initial classes, she focuses on doing away with the "inner censor" and often many students discover their hidden writing potential. Some of the pre-tested methods she employs include: 1) teacher and students write and immediately read aloud their writing with no group comments until a piece is completed, 2) writing any item coming to mind after a reading of poetry, and 3) letter writing exercises. Although this short article did not have a formal methodology, she attempted to establish a theoretical rationale by citing poets who have proved useful in class discussion. The article did have a conclusion, was well-organized and thoughtfully

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

written.

Lynne Dozier (1995) adopts an interesting approach in her article "The Three P's: Poetry, Prose and Profit" by co-authoring her article along with several of her students, who collaborated on a "for profit" literary journal which she introduced and produced at her school. Dozier responds to the problem that students who need feedback for their creative work go unpublished because selections are made by teachers or peer writers who overlook their work. Her goal in establishing the literary magazine was to make writing accessible to all students. By publishing and selling a school magazine for profit, students feel more of a sense of ownership and empowered to use teamwork. Dozier described the methodology she employed to help the students with their efforts. She established certain criteria for the election of staff, planned training sessions for editing the magazine, methods of jurying entries, and planned their advertising campaign . Various editors acted as spokespersons for each department, including artwork, computer and paper concerns, financing and patronage publication. This article was an interesting model and although lacking a reference framework, gave an completely objective perspective on such an endeavor.

Teacher Nancy Gorrell (1993) relates a similar experience in her article "Publishing the Poetry Chapbook" when she describes leading a group of eleventh and twelfth graders through the experience of publishing poetry in an elective creative writing course. Although Gorrell does not state a specific problem, she notes that for seniors, the idea of creating a book of their own seemed appealing. Gorrell originally intended for the class to make a single small booklet of poems for in-class use, but when students begged for extra copies, she realized she could expand the idea into a poetry chapbook. Gorrell used other poetry chapbooks as models and described a five-stage process over two years which was employed to create the chapbooks. Although this study lacked a specific problem, hypothesis, theoretical rationale or formal conclusion, it gave a comprehensive, well -organized presentation on publishing a poetry chapbook, covering all practical and emotional concerns and was useful to the survey.

Steven Wolk (1994) introduces his article, "Adolescents, Poetry and Trust", by giving a personal narrative of how he came to teach and presents a convincing argument for teaching appreciation of poetry and creative writing . His article refutes the notion that some students are unable to appreciate poetry. If teachers increase

their expectations, students perform at a higher level, bringing new perspectives and a fresh outlook. Wolk contends that writing poetry gives young voices an outlet. Outlines of the curriculum of his classes are explained, including the sequencing of the poems he uses in introducing poetry to young students. In doing so, he establishes his theoretical rationale. He relates details of the students responses to the various poems and finds that students have the strongest reactions to the writing of their peers. Wolk includes some of these poems and the student's responses to his criticism in the text. This article was useful because it identified factors to use in evaluating poems of young people. The article takes its methodology from Wolk's teaching experience, and concludes that middle school, jr. high and high school students are quite capable of appreciating and producing effective poetry.

Marilyn Bates (1995) opens her article "Speaking the Mind's Eye: Student Artists Respond to Student Poets" by giving examples of artists who have been inspired to paint in response to the work of poets. She studied the relationship between poetry and art. Her methodology consists of collaborating with the high school art teacher in an assignment where his art students illustrate the poetic work of her creative writing class. Numerous examples of poetry, artwork, and Bates' assessments of their correlations are reproduced in the text. Bates establishes a strong theoretical rationale by citing references and relating them to poems and artwork. She focuses on the importance of drawing to oral and written speech, relating these theories to research and poems in the study. By illustrating the poems, the artists externalize them, leading the poets to develop more insight into their own work. The artwork affirms the student poet's longings and need for inner expression. The contentions of this article were well supported by solid research and the poems and artwork made a striking counterpoint. The article made a unique contribution to the survey and exemplified willing cooperation between departments within a school. It would be interesting for the author to ask the poets to respond creatively to other work by the art students and then compare the two assignments.

Literature Discussing Journal Writing

Nancy Hudson (1995) wrote "The Violence of Their Lives: The Journal Writing of Two High School Freshmen" in which she employed the journal writing of two young men who are termed "at risk, elderly" freshmen from her writing class at a Vo-Tech Center . Hudson selected journal excerpts revealing the role which violence and

gang membership assume in the student's lives. The journal fragments are discussed in an empathetic and sensitive manner and Hudson's comments and the classroom conditions in which the journals were produced is described. In the author's methodology to have the students increase their fluency and develop self-confidence early on in the class, she instituted a "no-rules" journal with no predetermined topics, no spelling or usage requirements, no grammar rules and written to student-selected music. Comments were returned in a personal letter to the students. Hudson established a theoretical rationale in her article by citing other authorities on the subject of journal writing's effectiveness. She describes the non-punitive climate she assumed with the students to enable them not to feel threatened by authority in her classroom. It was illuminating to learn the politics of gang behavior at their young age. Hudson's attitude is unconvincing at times, and could be construed as self-aggrandizing as she ministers as advocate to the disadvantaged. However, she presents an interesting model of a journal writing class under challenging circumstances. She does not undertake a specific problem in the article, outside of wanting to relate the histories of the two freshmen, and to explain how journal writing became a useful and acceptable tool for them through the methodology she undertakes in the class. This article provided a useful model for establishing a non-judging and non-punitive classroom climate.

In a similar vein, R. W. Burniske (1994) discusses the problem of journal assessment and its effects on student writing in his article "Creating Dialogue: Teacher Response to Journal Writing". He contends that encouraging students who write poorly without correcting them is one of the risks which teachers must take. Burniske employs a methodology of journal keeping, offering assigned and open topics with assessments returned in letter form. Burniske reports that journal keeping seems to create a dialogue between teacher and student and he often asks students to respond to his comments in their journals. He develops a reciprocal approach between teacher and student. Burniske maintains that the conditioning of teachers to correct, evaluate and grade is not useful for journal evaluation. Burniske gives examples of his comments and difficulties which students encounter with not being graded. Burniske limits his assessment to his ten year experience as a creative writing teacher. He systematically profiles a number of his critiques on student work and student response to his comments. The article concludes by affirming that a non- judging approach is

more empowering to student's self-esteem and that writing must evolve creatively. This attitude contrasts with McFarlane (1993).

In "A Cognitive Model of Journal Writing", Peggy Cole (1993) constructs a careful study to examine a class of fourteen evening students in an "Introduction to Literature" class. Her study was based on student journals written in response to literature of varying difficulty over a twelve week session. Classroom methodology included oral and written instructions, in-class practice sessions, feedback models and video study aids. The journals were then evaluated by Cole, using certain criteria and the students completed a questionnaire after their first and last journal. This data was then analyzed and subjected to a cognitive taxonomy model and web graphics. Conclusions were that students tended to view journal writing as a positive tool to help them construct the meaning of the stories, helpful in areas of attending to details, and asking and answering questions about the stories. At times, this analysis was difficult to interpret. The article was meticulously researched, but perhaps tried to cover too many points. Cole includes her recommendations for further research in the study.

Literature on Scriptwriting

Lawrence Barnes and Micah Dial (1995) focus their attention on screenwriting in "Scripting Screenplays: An Idea for Integrating Writing, Reading, Thinking and Media Literacy". They study the problem of students becoming more attuned to the moving image, less patient with the printed page. Barnes and Dial suggest screenwriting as an alternative, giving ten reasons to include screenwriting in the curriculum. They give information on presenting a unit on screenwriting and a chronology of screenplays. This article includes a research problem, theoretical rationale and a conclusion. It gives useful theory and instruction on screenwriting and a lesson plan based on their model would be a popular and well-received departure from the ordinary.

Diana Mitchell (1994) also used scriptwriting as a teaching method and describes her experiences in "Scripting for Involvement and Understanding". Using a narrative point of view, she explains how she stumbled on scriptwriting as a rainy day activity, having students write scripts for a news or puppet show and perform them. She then employed her model as an alternative to a book report, having students write a script of a chapter of a library book, and then perform the script before the class. Mitchell clarifies her methodology to the class by presenting a model of a script for a

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

novel she had recently completed reading. She made enough copies of the script for all the characters, and had the students dramatize it. In this way, Mitchell incorporates drama with the creative writing exercise. This article was not written according to a formal research methodology, but included a problem, a carefully described methodology and a supporting conclusion. Mitchell convinces the reader of the validity of in-class scriptwriting and presents her information concisely.

Planning a Visiting Author's Program

Joseph Sanacore (1993) presents arguments for having students meet directly with authors, in "Supporting a Visiting Author's Program" to discover what inspires them to write and methods of implementing such a program. Sanacore focuses on explaining a seven step program on methods of organizing a visiting authors program and gives an example of positive interaction between students and an author during such a presentation. Sanacore explains the benefits of such a program and addresses the subjects of censorship and politics. Although the article is very loosely referenced and is more of a guide, it makes a contribution to the survey owing to Sanacore's hands-on knowledge of the program.

Summary and Conclusion

The articles in this research survey cover a wide range of subjects. The majority of articles on theory involve teachers formulating objective judgements on a highly subjective content matter. The articles dealing with classroom methods deal with hands-on methods of teaching creative writing on a daily basis.These articles tended to be more subjective in nature. The articles indicated a trend towards relaxing strictness and discipline in the creative writing classroom to unblock creative flow. More validity is being ascribed to young people's creative writing, indicating an increased appreciation of this subject.

The majority of the articles in this survey fall into the good to excellent category; these would account for 80%. The few articles of poor quality had some redeeming features and these would account for the remaining 20% of the articles (Hammond [1994] Cole [1993] and Lockwood [1994]). Overall, descriptions of methodologies were well done, but often certain features of a research study were not approached. Generally, the articles drew conclusions from their discussion. The articles which seemed most successful (Tavalin [1995] , Zancanella [1988], Bates [1995] and Bugeja [1992]) covered all points of research methodology in an organized and consistent

manner. Although a number of articles lacked certain aspects of formal research methodology, every article covered at least one research criterion. Overall, the study revealed a growing emphasis on creative writing in the academic curriculum as well as an acceleration of faculty interest in the subject. The high slant of the research in the theory and poetry areas indicates a need for study in content areas of prose and alternative classroom methods of teaching creative writing . More procedures tested in experimental situations, with formal data collection and variable analysis would be useful.

References

Barnes, L. & Dial, M. (1995). Scripting Screenplays: An Idea for Intergating Reading, Writing, Thinking and Media Literacy. English Journal, 84, (2) 86-91.

Bates, M. (1995). Speaking the Mind's Eye: Student Artists Respond to Student Poets. English Journal, 84 (2), 79-85.

Bugeja, M. (1992). Why We Stop Reading Poetry. English Journal, 81, (3) 32-42.

Burniske, R.W. (1994) . Creating Dialogue: Teacher Response to Journal Writing. English Journal, 83, (4), 84-87.

Cole, P. (1993). A Cognitive Model of Journal Writing. Paper presented at 1994 National Convention of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology, (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 373709)

Davis, G. (1995). Portrait of the Creative Person. The Educational Forum, 59, 423-429.

Domina, L. (1994). The Radar O'Reiley School of Creative Writing. Paper presented at annual meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication, March 1994. (ERIC Document Repreduction Service No. ED 372 398)

Dozier, L. (1995). The Three P's: Poetry,Prose and Profit. English Journal, 84 (7), 37-42.

Ediger, M. (1992). The Pupil and Poetry. Guide. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 347 558)

Ediger, M. (1994) Creative Writing in the Language Arts. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 370 130)

Elliot, G. (1994). The Angel in the Academy: The Creative Writer as Helpmeet on the Distaff Side of English Studies. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED374 423)

Gorrell, N. (1993). Publishing the Poetry Chapbook. The English Journal, 82 (2), 42-46.

Hammond, C. (1994). A User's Guide to the Internal Screen. English Journal, 83 (4), 73-78.

Hudson, N. (1995). The Violence of Their Lives: The Journal Writing of Two High School Freshmen, English Journal, 84 (5), 65-69.

Landsman, J. (1993). Loosening Up the Up-Tight Writing Student, Teachers and Writers,25 (2),1-5.

Lockwood, D. (1994). Poets on Teaching Poetry.English Journal , 83 (5) 65-70.

McFarlane, R. (1993). An Apologia for Creative Writing. College English,55 (1) 28-45.

McGee,L. (1995). Finding the Poet in New Writers.Journal of Reading, 38 (6) 470-474.

Mitchell, D. (1994). Scripting for Involvement and Understanding. English Journal 83 (6) 82-83.

Morris, C. & Haight, D. (1993). A Funny Thing Happened When We Began to Write,English Journal , 82 (8) 25-29.

Reichart, N. (1994). Defining and Redefining Boundaries in a Creative Writing Workshop. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 376 493)

Sanacore, J. (1993). Supporting a Visiting Authors Program. Guide, (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 370 129)

Tavalin, F. (1995). Context for Creativity: Listening to Voices, Allowing A Pause. Journal of Creative Behavior, 29 (2) 133-142.

Wolk, S. (1994). Adolescents, Poetry and Trust. Language Arts, 71(2) 108-114.

Zancanella, D. (1988). On the Nature of Fiction Writing.Language Arts, 65 (3) 238-244.